2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

Aden

175
[312] That Aden still possessed some fine buildings even as late as 1710 we know from the record left by a French traveller who, after referring to the "handsome" aqueduct which had been built originally in 1500 to bring water into the town from Sheikh Othman ten miles away, and deploring the state of the fortifications, referred to the town in the following terms:

[342] "The city is still considerably large and one may still see
[349] several handsome houses two storeys high with flat roofs, but there is also an abundance of rubbish and ruins. It must be
[368] owned that there is nothing finer of its kind than the baths there.
[532] They are lined with marble or jasper and covered with a handsome dome, having a hole at the top to let in light, and adorned on the inside with galleries supported by magnificent pillars."[1]

178 There was no sign of this delightful place when I arrived,
368 nor were there any public baths, swimming or otherwise, until
346 twenty-four years later when I opened the handsome Municipal Swimming Bath in Holkat Bay, but by 1931 Aden was by no means in an "exigent condition of poverty and neglect". Far from it; it was a flourishing town, though all that remained of the ancient splendour was the tall white minaret in Crater overlooking what is now the Football Stadium. A lonely ghost from the past whose mosque has long since disappeared.

000 My disagreeable first impression remains with many travellers for the rest of their lives and the mere mention of the name Aden is sufficient to conjure up in their imaginations an exaggerated recollection of heat, haze and noise and, above all, a barrenness beyond belief.

312 In the early nineteen-thirties fresh water from wells in the village of Sheikh Othman had only recently been brought in to the main town and the population were still dependent mainly on condensed water for drinking purposes, and there was virtually no water at all for gardens or any other form of
000 cultivation. Only a few like myself succeeded in penetrating the haze and forgetting the lack of vegetation and the discomfort of prickly heat, as we became more and more absorbed with the people and their problems and travelled beyond the

[1] Dr. J. C. Young, *Ancient History of Aden*, 1923.